



# FOREIGN POLICY BULLETIN

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## RUSSIA PROPOSES POLISH BORDER SETTLEMENT

THE announcement over the Moscow radio on January 11 that the Soviet government does not consider "unchangeable" the 1939 frontier fixed under the Ribbentrop-Molotov agreement, and offers Poland a new frontier corresponding to the Curzon Line of 1919, as well as an alliance of mutual assistance against Germany modeled on the Russo-Czech pact of December 12, 1943, should do much to ease the dangerous tension created by the advance of Russian forces into Poland. This tension threatened to precipitate a conflict among the United Nations over the spoils of war when the war itself is actually far from won, with the possibility that the Germans might yet snatch victory out of impending defeat. The mere prospect of such an eventuality should have a sobering effect both on the great powers, not one of which can win the war alone, and on smaller countries like Poland, not one of which can be liberated from Germany without the aid of the great powers.

**CURZON LINE PROPOSED.** The Russian declaration of January 11 is constructive in both tone and substance—although its assertion that the plebiscite that resulted in the incorporation of western Ukraine and western White Russia into the U.S.S.R. was "carried out on broad democratic principles" might call for a re-definition of "democratic." The main points of the declaration are that the Treaty of Riga of 1921\* committed an injustice by leaving large bodies of Ukrainians and White Russians within the Polish state—a contention which would find support among neutral observers; that "a strong and independent Poland," whose re-establishment the Soviet government declares it favors, will be strengthened by the exclusion from its borders of non-Polish populations; and that Moscow is ready to "correct" the Ribbentrop-Molotov frontier in such a way that

"districts in which the Polish population predominates be handed over to Poland." For this purpose, the Soviet government is ready to accept the Curzon Line, which was proposed by the Supreme Allied Council in 1919 as a military line beyond which Russian armies should not go into Poland. This line, which at the time was rejected by both Poles and Russians, would have left the predominantly Ukrainian and White Russian areas of eastern Poland on the Russian side.

Moscow's proposal will probably be unacceptable to extreme Polish nationalists. It corresponds, however, to suggestions made by the more moderate Polish spokesmen in this country. From a strictly realistic point of view, the possession by either Russia or Poland of the disputed borderlands between the Curzon Line and the pre-1939 Russo-Polish frontier would not of itself assure the security of either country, since it is not a strategically defensible territory such as that, for example, which blocks the Allied advance in Italy. Such security as both Russia and Poland may hope to attain against the renewal of German expansion will have to be sought in a genuine understanding between the two countries, within the framework of a viable international organization.

An understanding, in the form of an alliance of mutual assistance, is offered by the Soviet government—but it is offered to the Polish people, not to the Polish government in London which, according to the January 11 declaration, "has proved incapable of establishing friendly relations with the Soviet Union" or of organizing "an active struggle against the German invaders in Poland itself." What the Soviet government proposes, without actually stating it in so many words, is the creation either in Poland or elsewhere of a new régime—the Union of Polish Patriots in Moscow might be the prototype—that would be ready to cooperate with

\*See V. M. Dean, "Problem of Eastern Poland Tests Moscow-Teheran Accord," *Foreign Policy Bulletin*, January 7, 1944.

the Kremlin on terms it considers acceptable. That Poland, once it has been liberated from German rule, will want to effect fundamental political, economic and social changes has been made clear both by the underground movement in the homeland, and by many Poles in exile. It is not a foregone conclusion, however, that a free Poland would necessarily opt for the Soviet system. Nor would the imposition of this system from outside assure Poland the degree of internal stability that is essential for its postwar reconstruction.

**EAST PRUSSIA TO POLAND?** In compensation for the territorial loss Poland now faces, the Soviet government suggests that Poland "must be reborn, not by the occupation of Ukrainian and White Russian territories, but by the return of territories seized from Poland by the Germans." Although no specific reference is made to East Prussia, this presumably is the chief area that the Soviet government has in mind. The proposal that Poland should take East Prussia has been heard with increasing frequency in this country, with the corollary that all Germans be removed from that territory.

On many grounds, the proposal to exchange Eastern Poland for East Prussia may seem to have merits. What is readily forgotten is that East Prussia, centuries-old outpost of Germanism against the Slavs, has the same sentimental and ethnographic significance for the Germans as western Ukraine and western White Russia are claimed by the Russians to have for Russia. The transfer of East Prussia to the Poles, even minus its inhabitants, would create a new *terra irredenta* which the German people would strive to recover. To say that loss of this territory would only serve the Germans right is to take a short-sighted view of the post-war period. For whatever we undertake to do concerning Germany should be viewed not in terms of what it does to the Ger-

mans, but what it does for the reconstruction of Europe. And the seizure by Poland of East Prussia, which at no time in history was an integral part of the Polish state, would merely lay the basis for another war. Nor would mere physical removal of the inhabitants of East Prussia into Germany of itself produce a change of mind among Germans. Such a change can be effected only through an internal revolt against the social and economic system carried over from feudal times into the Weimar Republic.

**TOWARD INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION.** Future relations between Germany and Poland, as well as between Poland and the Soviet Union, are obviously of immediate and poignant concern to Poles and Russians. But they are also of profound concern to all the other United Nations. The main issue at stake today is not the determination of this or that frontier, but the creation of an international organization in which the security of all countries, large and small, would be a matter of common concern, to be achieved by common effort. In a broadcast of January 8 inaugurating a new series entitled "The State Department Speaks" James C. Dunn, political adviser on European affairs to Secretary of State Hull, said that the most important single question at the Moscow conference was whether the great powers "were determined to seek their, and the world's, salvation through international cooperation or whether they had other plans and designs for the future" which would have raised "the dread certainty" of a third World War "even before World War II was finished." The Moscow proposal of January 11 holds out hope that, at the crossroads where we now stand, the method of international cooperation may yet be the road chosen by the first great power to threaten Germany with defeat in Europe.

VERA MICHELES DEAN

## CARIBBEAN COMMISSION POINTS TO NEW FORM OF COLONIAL RULE

The announcement on January 4 that a West Indian conference is being set up as an advisory body to the Anglo-American Caribbean Commission, thus providing a channel for consultation with local representatives, marks an important step in the development of joint colonial administration. It has already been suggested in Washington that the experience gained from this experiment may provide a useful model for handling post-war colonial problems in other areas of the world.

**EXPERIMENT IN REGIONALISM.** The Anglo-American Caribbean Commission was established on March 9, 1942 "for the purpose of encouraging and strengthening social and economic cooperation" between the United States and its possessions in the Caribbean, and the United Kingdom and the British colonies in the same area. Its members, working un-

der co-chairmen—one American and one British—were to deal "primarily with matters pertaining to labor, agriculture, housing, health, education, social welfare, finance, economics . . . and on these matters to advise their respective governments."

It was apparently intended at the outset that the Caribbean Commission should not only concern itself with maintenance of the economic structure of the islands and provision of the basic necessities of life, but also lay down plans for reconstruction of the area. It was some time, however, before the Commission was able to look beyond war necessities, for intensification of German submarine warfare in West Indian waters in the summer of 1942 made it necessary to concentrate all efforts on the immediate problem of supplying the essential needs of the islands. In this task considerable success was achieved in the

coordination of shipping, food production, economic controls, and in measures to spread employment and regularize wages. Benefits of a permanent nature can also be expected, particularly from increased production in agriculture and fishing. In addition, the interchange of information and direct investigation—for example, by American officials in British territories—has established a useful technique.

The West Indian Conference, acting in an advisory capacity, should enhance the value of the Commission by providing opportunities for representatives of the local populations to express their views and become associated with its work. The new body is to be composed of two delegates from each United States territory and each British colony or group of colonies, and is to be furnished by the Commission with a permanent secretariat, acting presumably as a constant link between the two bodies. The first meeting, which will be held in the near future, is expected to consider such questions as increasing supplies for the islands, stabilizing prices, maintaining food production after the war, continuing the development of fisheries, and accelerating health and quarantine measures. It is also stated that the Conference will be free to invite the participation of representatives from other than American and British islands, a step which, if taken, will remove one of the limitations in the present arrangement.

**ADVANTAGES OUTWEIGH DISADVANTAGES.** The pattern being developed in the Caribbean foreshadows the possibility of international cooperation in other colonial areas. On July 13, 1943 Colonel Oliver Stanley, British Colonial Secretary, told the House of Commons that, while the British government intended to remain responsible for the administration of British colonies, it favored the establishment of Commissions in certain regions so that common problems might be met and solved by a common effort. "These Commissions," the Colonial Secretary declared, "would comprise not only the

states with colonial territories in the region, but also other states which have in the region a major strategic or economic interest." This would mean, apparently, that in a Commission for the East Indies, the Netherlands, Britain, the United States, China, and possibly others, would be represented.

From the colonial point of view alone, regionalism offers many obvious advantages. First, such colonial problems as disease, soil erosion, transport, migrant labor, etc., cross boundaries and can be effectively handled only by action over a wide area. Second, economic policy could be integrated through a regional commission and the financial needs of the poorer colonies met more readily if they were part of a larger group. And, finally, the third-party judgment provided by a commission would act as a stimulus to the administration to adopt progressive policies.

But there are certain drawbacks which are not so obvious, and therefore perhaps the more dangerous. The interposition of an intermediate authority between a colony and the colonial power may tend to obscure the source of real responsibility, and widen the gap between the governors and the governed. In the case of British colonies, for example, responsibility rests on the Colonial Secretary, and public opinion can be brought to bear on him to change policy. It might be unwise, moreover, to include in such a scheme a colony which was well on the way to self-government, for it would suddenly find many of the powers it was about to assume transferred to a new organization. There would also be a danger that a nation with a reactionary native policy—South Africa, for example—might assume the dominating influence on a commission, or at least that divergent colonial policies would lead to deadlock.

On balance, however, the advantages of joint administration—or more accurately, joint supervision—of colonies on a regional basis seem clearly to outweigh the possible drawbacks, and the system has probably come to stay. There will be many difficulties, not least the problem of associating the colonial peoples in the work of the commission. The West Indians were restive at their exclusion from the Caribbean Commission, and it still remains to be seen whether the newly established Conference can satisfy their aspirations. But, if the system as now set up in the West Indies can be made to work in the interests of both the Caribbean peoples and the governing powers, the pattern established there will probably be adopted in other colonial regions.

HOWARD P. WHIDDEN, JR.

*For a survey of some of the basic questions that preoccupy public opinion today, READ—*

### THE U.S.S.R. AND POST-WAR EUROPE

by Vera Micheles Dean

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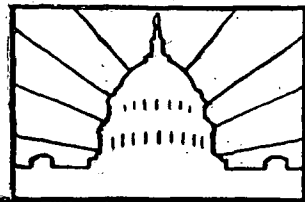
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# Washington News Letter



JAN. 10.—The Washington Administration, which expects Polish Prime Minister Stanislaw Mikolajczyk to visit this country before long, has until this week remained hopeful that relations between the Soviet and Polish governments might be mended.

The Polish controversy is a domestic as well as a foreign issue for the United States, whose 3,000,000 citizens of Polish birth or parentage hold a strong political position in New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, and Illinois, and have influence in other states. Answers to a questionnaire distributed by the Office of War Information for another federal agency last summer disclosed that an overwhelming majority of the Polish-Americans take an active interest in Polish affairs. The impending visit of Mikolajczyk might enhance this interest.

**POLISH-AMERICAN GROUPS.** The Administration is aware that Polish-Americans may vote next November according to their view of how capably the State Department has protected Poland's interests in its controversy with the Soviet Union. Some officials, however, doubt that political opponents of the Administration will try openly to take advantage of any Polish-American dissatisfaction, because the success of the international collaboration policy which both Republicans and Democrats have approved might well depend on a successful compromise settlement of the Soviet-Polish issue.

Polish-Americans do not form a solid bloc. Seven of the ten Polish-American Congressmen are Democrats, the others Republicans. Polish-Americans belong to three main organized groups, each of which follows a different line regarding Polish politics. Chauvinist Polish-Americans, favoring nationalist expansion of Poland at the expense of Russia and Czechoslovakia, have formed the National Committee of Americans of Polish Descent, which is known as KNAPP. Its sponsor is Ignace Matuszewski, a Polish emigré. Its actual organizer is Maximilian Wegrzynek, wealthy New York importer.

Polish-Americans on the Left, favoring full Polish accord with Russia on Russia's terms, organized the Kosciusko League last autumn in Detroit. Polish intellectuals on the Left have rallied around Oscar Lange, professor at Chicago University. Before the Kosciusko League was established, the politically most active Polish Leftist among the workers was Leo Kryczki, of Milwaukee, president of the American Slav Congress. In December a number of Poles withdrew from the Congress in protest against what

they considered its radical tendencies.

Most Polish-Americans belong to the leading societies of the Polish-American Council—the Polish National Alliance, the Polish Catholic Union or the Polish-American Women's Alliance. The Council, moderate in politics, supports the Polish government line. Its president, Dean Francis Swietlick of the law school at Marquette University, Milwaukee, blocked a move to make him president of the American Slav Congress and also thwarted an attempt by the KNAPP to oust him from the chairmanship of the Polish National Alliance.

The nine Polish language dailies and 35 semi-weekly and weekly papers controlled by the different groups show uncertainty about the line they will follow in American politics, although they take pronounced stands on foreign affairs. Judging by circulation figures, the Polish government has the preponderant press backing through the chief papers of the Polish National Alliance, the daily *Dziennik Zwiazkowy* and the weekly *Cjoda*, both published in Chicago; of the Polish Roman Catholic Union, the *Dziennik Chicagoski*; of the Polish-American Women's Alliance, the Chicago and Pittsburgh weekly *Glos Polek*; and through two large independent dailies, the Buffalo *Dziennik dla Wsjystkich*, and the Cleveland *Wiadomosci Codzienne*. KNAPP's organ is the *Nowy Swiat*, New York daily, which Wegrzynek owns and to which Matuszewski contributes. The Kosciusko League's paper is the Detroit weekly *Glos Ludowy*.

**ADMINISTRATION'S ATTITUDE.** The Polish side of the territorial question raised by the Russian claim to the eastern areas has often been presented to the American government. President Roosevelt heard it from the late Prime Minister Wladyslaw Sikorski, who visited the United States twice after Russia entered the war in 1941. The Administration has taken neither the Russian nor the Polish side. It has contented itself with noting the points of difference between the two governments and has sought to get them on speaking terms, in the belief that the controversy over boundaries can be resolved later. The American government has not indicated, however, that it accepts the view put forward by David Zaslavsky who, in his attack in *Pravda* of January 5 on Wendell Willkie, said that the question of the eastern Polish territory is an internal affair of the Soviet Union, and not the concern of other countries.

BLAIR BOLLES

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